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Department of Vermont Health Access

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Federal Decision Will Provide Additional Time for Businesses to Make Transition

Mandatory Health Coverage and Reporting Requirements for Large Employers Postponed

WINOOSKI, VT – Robin Lunge, Agency of Administration's Director of Health Care Reform, said today's decision by the Obama Administration to provide an additional year before the Affordable Care Act large employer reporting and coverage mandate begins will have little impact on the plan to launch Vermont Health Connect on October 1. The federal change applies only to employers with 50 or more full-time equivalent employees and does not affect the individual mandate or state insurance marketplaces created by the Affordable Care Act.

"This announcement does not affect small businesses, which were already exempt from the federal reporting and coverage requirement and will remain so in 2015 and beyond," Lunge said. "Also, because Vermont has fewer large employers than other states, and nearly all of our large employers already offer health insurance coverage to employees, the impact in this state should be minimal. Not having to collect this data for an additional year will help lighten the state's load a bit, too."

Starting in 2014, individuals and small businesses with 50 full-time employees or fewer will use Vermont Health Connect to find coverage. In 2016, businesses with 100 or fewer employees will be able to offer coverage for their employees through Vermont Health Connect. Preliminary premium rates, expected to be finalized early this month, compare favorably to current plans in Vermont's market.

Lunge said, "We remain on track to open Vermont Health Connect this October, and look forward to providing Vermonters with the ability to make apples-to-apples comparisons of their health coverage options and access financial help to pay for it. Later this month, the Vermont Health Connect Navigators will be in communities across the state to help individuals and small businesses learn more about their health coverage options.

"The Vermont Health Connect team has been working hard to ensure Vermont's businesses, families and individuals understand the new health coverage options that will be available to them this fall and we are here to answer questions."

Additional information is available on VermontHealthConnect.gov. Vermonters can use the website to find out if they are eligible for financial help to pay for health insurance starting in 2014. The website, which is continually updated, also offers small businesses information about implementing health reforms.

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